

Answer: Regional center clients must meet the same eligibility criteria as all other foster youth. A regional center consumer who is under an order for foster care placement on his/her 18th birthday is eligible for EFC benefits as long as the youth (1) meets one of the participation conditions; (2) participates in a Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP); and (3) resides in a licensed or approved placement. Additionally, a mutual agreement must be signed by the Non-Minor Dependent (NMD) to participate in EFC, unless the NMD is incapable of making an informed agreement, but this is not a condition of payment.

Participation condition number five, “medical condition,” encompasses youth who are incapable of meeting any of the other participation conditions due to a documented medical condition; this can include regional center clients per ACL 11-61.

The TILP describes the services that the NMD is receiving to support their active engagement in one of the five participation criteria. For a NMD who is participating in EFC under "medical condition", the TILP should describe the NMDs medical condition as well as the NMDs transitional goals and services that the NMD receives to support the overall case plan goals. A NMD who meets the medical condition criteria can still attempt modified work and educational activities. In this situation, the primary participation condition would be "medical condition," even if the NMD is participating in other activities to develop additional life skills. All case plan goals should be developed with the active participation and consent of the NMD, including goals regarding placement decisions or exiting foster care to transition into an adult system of care (with SSI benefits, if eligible) prior to reaching 21 years of age (see ACL 11-77).

NMDs who are regional center consumers are eligible to receive additional support services, including the “dual agency” rate, in most licensed or approved foster care placements. The NMD must reside in a licensed or approved placement in order to receive payment benefits. NMDs who are regional center clients placed in a group home should be transitioned to an appropriate less restrictive placement upon turning 18 or completing high school (if before age 19). As with all NMDs, those meeting the medical condition may remain in a group home beyond age 19 only if the continued group home placement is a short-term transition to an adult system of care because their needs cannot be appropriately met through continued EFC placement.